



# Shrewsbury SEPAC

## Special Education Parent Advisory Council

May 4, 2016



# Acknowledgements

- ▶ School Committee
- ▶ Dr. Joe Sawyer
- ▶ Melissa Maguire
- ▶ Special Education Staff
- ▶ PTO Council
- ▶ Prior SpedPac
- ▶ Parents and Caregivers



# Content

- ▶ SEPAC Board Members
- ▶ 2015-2016 SEPAC Survey
  - ▶ Result Analysis
- ▶ Events & Activities
  - ▶ SEPAC Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month  
All are welcome
  - ▶ April 11<sup>th</sup> - Meet & Greet
  - ▶ May 4<sup>th</sup> - School Committee Report (TODAY)
  - ▶ May 9<sup>th</sup> - Basic Rights Workshop
- ▶ SEPAC Goals



# SEPAC Board Members

- ▶ Bashar Jarkasy, Co-President
- ▶ Sanjiv Lal, Co-President
- ▶ Colleen Corbett, Secretary
- ▶ Rajesh Chug, Treasurer and Technology Expert
- ▶ Jill DeBender, Board Member
- ▶ Blake Poggi, Board Member



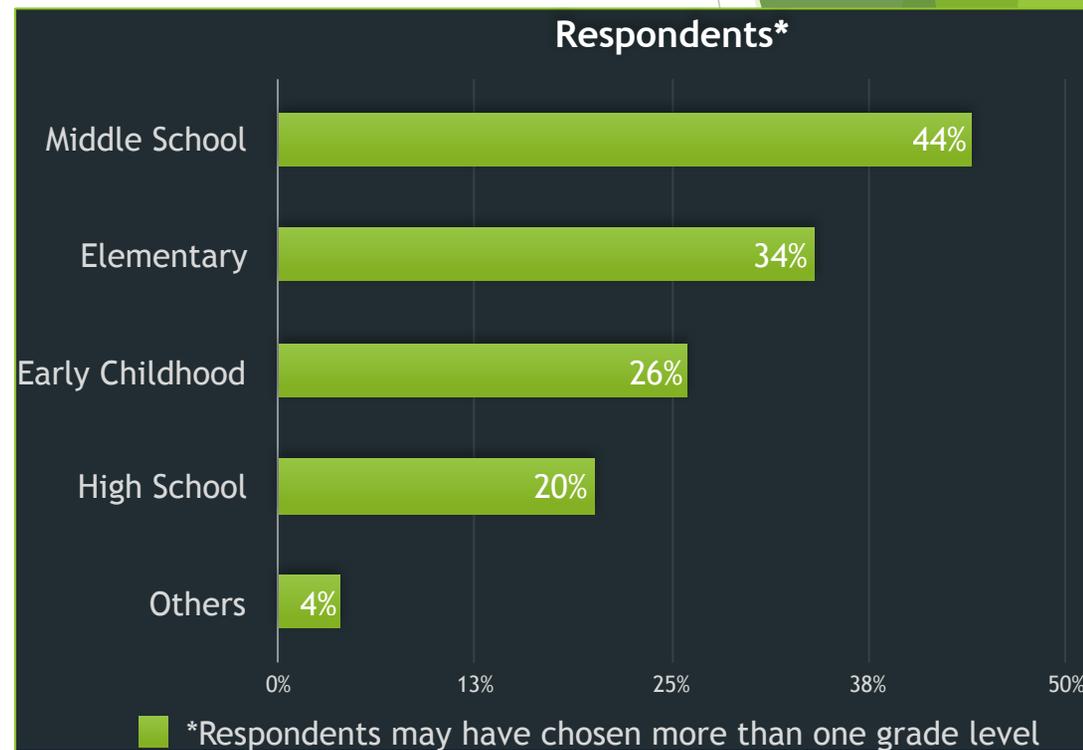
# 2015-2016 SEPAC Survey Goals

- ▶ Introduce new SEPAC
- ▶ Announce communication protocols
  - ▶ Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/ShrewsburySEPAC>
  - ▶ Email [Shrewsbury.SEPAC@gmail.com](mailto:Shrewsbury.SEPAC@gmail.com)
- ▶ Make connections with parents and caregivers
- ▶ Gain understanding of families' interests and availability
- ▶ Plan future workshops



# 2015-2016 SEPAC Survey Results - Respondents

- ▶ 51 parents and caregivers of 819 students
- ▶ 6% of students
- ▶ Schools represented
  - ▶ Parker Road
  - ▶ Paton
  - ▶ Spring Street
  - ▶ Floral Street
  - ▶ Sherwood
  - ▶ Oak
  - ▶ Shrewsbury High School





# 2015-2016 SEPAC Survey Results - Top Interests

Respondents could select more than one

- ▶ 60% selected Parents' Guide to IEPs and 504s
- ▶ 54% IEP Goals and Objectives
- ▶ 50% Social Skills
- ▶ 48% Basic Rights and Special Education Law
- ▶ 48% Reading and Writing



# 2015-2016 SEPAC Survey Vision

## Our vision in the words of parents:

The SEPAC should be a more involved, active resource for all parents of kids with special needs. It should be a strong community with its own voice and should help and guide parents to advocate for their children.



# Vision of the SEPAC

- ▶ Benefits of a strong SEPAC described by families:
  - ▶ Sharing
  - ▶ Guidance
  - ▶ Resources
  - ▶ Connections
  - ▶ Communication
  - ▶ Empathy
- ▶ We strive to bring together families of students with diverse needs and diagnoses and offer them a place where they will feel understood and supported.



# Event: April 11th Meet & Greet

- ▶ Introductory meeting
  - ▶ Opportunity to socialize, ask questions, share experiences and express concerns
  - ▶ Active, honest dialogue
  - ▶ Exchanged resources and information
  - ▶ Learned from each other
- ▶ Total of 22 Attendees
- ▶ Parents and grandparents
- ▶ One family moving from out of state



# Upcoming Event: May 9th Basic Rights Workshop



FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN  
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS  
INFORMING, EDUCATING, EMPOWERING FAMILIES

The Federation for Children with Special Needs  
presents

## ***BASIC RIGHTS*** ***In Special Education*** ***A Workshop for Parents and Professionals***

- ▶ Speaker: Gayle Dublin
- ▶ Positive response from parents
  - ▶ 19 attendees and counting...



# SEPAC Participation

- ▶ Visions of Community Conference (VOC2016) in Boston on March 5, 2016
  - ▶ Sponsored by the *Federation for Children with Special Needs*
  - ▶ 11,000 participants
- ▶ MassPAC membership and training
- ▶ PTO Presidents' Council quarterly meetings with Dr. Sawyer
- ▶ *Most Likely to Succeed* screening on March 16, 2016
- ▶ Interview panel to select new special education director on March 24 & 25, 2016
- ▶ Interview for Coordinated Program Review conducted by DESE on April 13, 2016
- ▶ Youth Mental Health First Aid course on May 2 & 3, 2016
- ▶ Northborough/Southborough (NSPAC) presentations:
  - ▶ *Introduction to the Transition Planning Process* on November 15, 2015
  - ▶ *The Most Common Cause of OCD and Anxiety that Your Pediatrician Has not Heard of...P.A.N.D.A.S* on April 27, 2016



# Areas of Concern

## ▶ Budget

- ▶ Loss of elementary level director position
- ▶ Loss of Sherwood special education and reading teachers
- ▶ Reduction in mental health resources
- ▶ Reduction in paraprofessional and ABA tech hours

## ▶ Considerations based on families' concerns

- ▶ Planning for special education students in future curriculum changes (*Most Likely to Succeed*)
- ▶ Promotion of students' social/emotional wellbeing
- ▶ Individualized services for students based on their unique needs
- ▶ Increased collaborative role of parents and caregivers on the IEP Team



# Looking Forward

- ▶ Welcome new Director of Special Education, **Meg Belsito**
- ▶ Hold SEPAC elections in the fall
- ▶ Stay connected to our school community
  - ▶ School Committee meetings
  - ▶ PTO Presidents' Council
  - ▶ Utilize technology to disseminate information
- ▶ Partner with neighboring SEPACs
  - ▶ Northborough/Southborough, Wachusett, Assabet Valley Regional High School



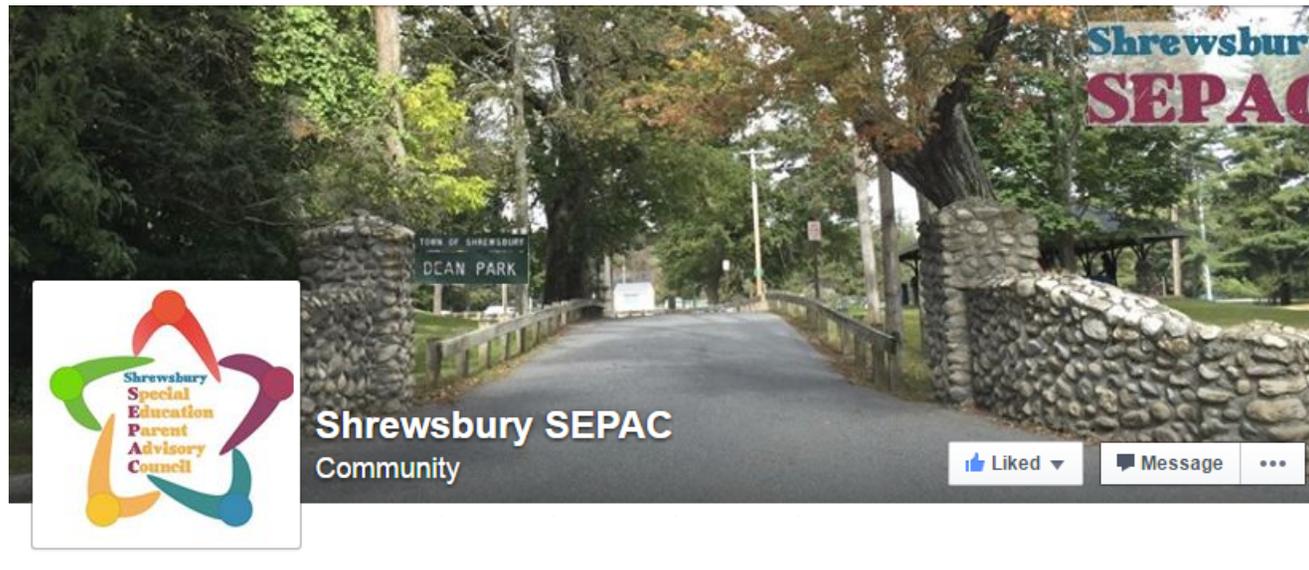
# SEPAC Goals

- ▶ Establish vibrant forum for parents and caregivers in the Shrewsbury Special Education community
- ▶ Offer multiple opportunities for families to socialize and participate through meetings, workshops and coffee hours
- ▶ Provide resources and assistance to parents to help them navigate the system and simplify challenges
- ▶ Actively reach families and address their questions and concerns via social media and email
- ▶ Build new avenues of communication and collaboration with school professionals and administrators

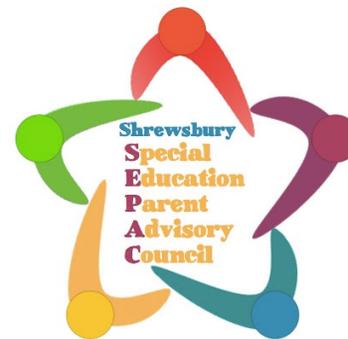


# Modes of Communication

- ▶ [shrewsbury.SEPAC@gmail.com](mailto:shrewsbury.SEPAC@gmail.com)
- ▶ <http://www.facebook.com/ShrewsburySEPAC>



# Summary



Thank you